

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are now present in this application, with new claims 15 and 16 being added by the present Preliminary Amendment. Claims 1, 11, and 15 are independent.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, an early indication of the allowability of each of claims 1-16 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John A. Castellano at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____

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